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THE RISE OF THE SARACENS AND THE
FOUNDATION OF THE WESTERN EMPIRE

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CHAPTER X

MAHOMET AND ISLĀM

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CHAPTER XI

THE EXPANSION OF THE SARACENS

GENERAL REMARKS, ASIA, EGYPT

THE migration of the Teutonic tribes and the expansion of the Saracens form the basis of the history of the Middle Ages. As the migrations laid the foundation for the development of the Western States, the diffusion of the Saracens gave the form which it has kept till our own day to the ancient contrast of East and West. These two movements gave birth to the severance between Christian Europe and the Muslim East, momentous not only throughout the Middle Ages but even to the present day. True, Spain was long included in the Muslim territory, while Eastern Europe and Asia Minor formed part of the Christian sphere, but these later changes simply alter the geographical aspect; the origin of the contrast, affecting universal history, dates back to the seventh century.

The Middle Ages regarded the severance from such a one-sided ecclesiastical and clerical point of view as was bound to obscure the comprehension of historical facts. The popular version of the matter, even among the cultured classes of to-day, is still under the spell of this tradition:—"Inspired by their prophet, the Arab hordes fall upon the Christian nations, to convert them to Islām at the point of the sword. The thread of ancient development is torn completely asunder; a new civilisation, that of Islām, created by the Arabs, takes the place of the older civilisation of Christianity; the eastern and western countries are opposed to each other on terms of complete estrangement, reacting on each other only during the period of the crusades." If we look into Arabian sources with this idea before us, we shall find it fully confirmed, for Arabian tradition also took its bearings from the ecclesiastical standpoint, like the tradition of the West; with one as with the other everything commenced with Mahomet and the expansion of the Arabs; Mahomet and the first Caliphs made all things anew and substantially created the civilisation of Islām. It is only in recent times that historical research has led away from this line of thought. We recognise now the historical continuity. Islām emerges from its

isolation and becomes heir to the Oriental-Hellenistic civilisation. It appears as the last link in a long development of universal history. From the days of Alexander the Great until the time of the Roman emperors the East had been compelled to endure Western conditions and European rule. But as in the days of the earlier emperors the Hellenic spirit was stifled by the embrace of the East, and as the classical world greedily absorbed the cults and religions of the East, an ethnical reaction of the East sets in from the third century onwards and the Semitic element begins to stir beneath the Hellenistic surface. Within the Christian sphere this current shews itself more especially in the territories of the Greek and Aramaic languages, and the difference between the Greek and the Latin Churches is mainly that between Asia and Europe. With the expansion of the Arabs then the East reacquires in the political sphere the independence which had been slowly preparing in the domain of civilisation. Nothing absolutely new therefore arrives from the expansion of the Arabs, not even conditions uncongenial to the West of the Middle Ages; in fact on closer examination we perceive an intimate inner relationship in the world of thought between the Christianity of the Middle Ages and Islām. This fact is moreover not remarkable, for both spheres of culture repose on the same foundation, the Hellenistic-Oriental civilisation of early Christian times. In the territory of the Mediterranean circle conquered by the Arabs this civilisation lived on, but as the empire of the Caliphs thrust its main centre further and further eastward, and annexed more and more the traditions of ancient Persia, the culture of Islām, at first strongly tinged with Hellenism, was bound to assume an ever stronger Oriental character. On the other hand on Western ground the Germanic genius freed itself from this civilisation, which as a foreign import could not thrive there, to develop out of its remnants the typically Western forms of the Middle Ages.

Just as the ecclesiastical conception on the one hand broke the historical continuity, it perceived on the other hand in the expansion of the Arabs nothing but a further extension of the religion of Islām and therefore totally misunderstood the real nature of the movement. It was not the religion of Islām which was by that time disseminated by the sword, but merely the political sovereignty of the Arabs. The acceptance of Islām by others than Arabians was not only not striven for, but was in fact regarded with disfavour. The subdued peoples might peacefully retain their old religions, provided only they paid ample tribute. As on conversion to Islām these payments ceased, at least in the early times such changes of religion were disliked. The circumstance that a few pious men subsequently practised such proselytism, or that the material advantages of apostasy gradually led the population of the conquered countries to Islām, must not blind our eyes to the fact that the movement originated from quite other motives.

The sudden surging forward of the Arabs was only apparently sudden. For centuries previously the Arab migration had been in preparation. It was the last great Semitic migration connected with the economical decline of Arabia. Such a decline is indisputable, even though we may not be disposed to accept all the conclusions which have in recent times been connected with this oft-discussed thesis. Ever since the commencement of our chronology the Arabs had been in fluctuation. South-Arabian tribes were lords of Medina, others also from South Arabia were settled in Syria and Mesopotamia. Legendary information, confirmed however by inscriptions of Southern Arabia, shews that for a long period the conditions of life in the southern part of the Arabian peninsula had been growing worse. With the decline of political power the care of the public waterworks, on which the prosperity of the land more or less depended, also suffered. In short, long before Mahomet Arabia was in a state of unrest, and a slow, uncontrollable infiltration of Arabian tribes and tribal branches had permeated the adjoining civilised lands in Persian as also in Roman territory, where they had met with the descendants of earlier Semitic immigrants to those parts, the Aramaeans, who were already long acclimatised there.

Persia and Byzantium suffered severely from this constant unrest in their border provinces, and both empires had endeavoured to organise the movement and to use it as a fighting medium, the one against the other. The Romans had organised the Syrian Arabs for this purpose under the leadership of princes of the house of Ghassân, the most celebrated of whom even received the title of patrician, while the Sâssânids founded a similar bulwark in Hîra, where the Lakhmites, under Persian sovereignty, lived a princely life, greatly celebrated by Arabian poets. A short-sighted policy, and probably also internal weakness, permitted the ruin of both of these States, which would have offered an almost insuperable barrier to the Islâmitic expansion. The hitherto united dominions of the Ghassânids were subdivided and various governors took the place of the popular Lakhmite princes. Thus the great empires had succeeded in destroying the smaller Arabian States which had grown too powerful, but the tradition remained, according to which the Arabians on the borders might with impunity levy contributions on the neighbouring cultivated countries during the constant wars between Persia and Byzantium. These traditions were assimilated by those Arabs then gradually becoming dependent on Medina, and their procedure was sanctioned and encouraged by the young and rising Caliphate; at first in a wavering, but later in a more and more energetic manner. The expansion of the Saracens is thus the final stage in a process of development extending over centuries. Islâm was simply a change in the watchword for which they fought; and thus arose at the same time an organisation which, based on religious and ethnical principles and crowned with unexpected success, was bound to attain an historical

importance quite different from that of buffer States like Ḥīra and Ghassān.

Under these circumstances it would be a mistake to regard the Arab migration merely as a religious movement incited by Mahomet. The question may in fact be put whether the whole movement is not conceivable without the intervention of Islām. There can in any case be no question of any zealous impulse towards proselytism. That strong religious tie which at the present time binds together all Muslims, that exclusive religious spirit of the later world of Islām, is at all events not the primary cause of the Arab migration, but merely a consequence of the political and cultural conditions caused by it. The importance of Islām in this direction lies in its masked political character, which the modern world has even in our own time to take into consideration. In the outset Islām meant the supremacy of Medina, but it soon identified itself with Arabianism, *i.e.* it preached the superiority of the Arabian people generally. This great idea gives an intellectual purport to the restless striving for expansion, and makes a political focus of the great Arabian State of Medina, founded on religion. Hunger and avarice, not religion, are the impelling forces, but religion supplies the essential unity and central power. The expansion of the Saracens' religion, both in point of time and in itself, can only be regarded as of minor import and rather as a political necessity. The movement itself had been on foot long before Islām gave it a party cry and an organisation. Then it was that the minor streams of Arabian nationality, gradually encroaching on the cultivated territory, united with the related elements already resident there and formed that irresistible migratory current which flooded the older kingdoms, and seemed to flood them suddenly.

If the expansion of the Saracens is thus allowed to take its proper place in the entire development of the Middle Ages, a glance at the state of affairs at the time of the prophet's death leads directly to the history of the Arab migration itself.

The death of the prophet is represented by tradition as an event which surprised the whole world and to the faithful seemed impossible, notwithstanding the fact that Mahomet had always confessed himself to be a mortal man. He had, it is true, never taken his eventual decease into consideration, nor had he left a definite code of laws or any instructions regarding his succession. But can we suppose a similar self-deception also among his nearest companions, who must certainly have seen how he was ageing, and must have had him before them in all his human weakness? Can we suppose any delusion in so circumspect a nature as Abū Bakr, or in such a genius for government as Omar? The energetic and wise conduct of both these men and their companion Abū 'Ubaida, immediately after the catastrophe, seems to prove the contrary and their action seems based on well-prepared arrangements. Energetic action was moreover very necessary, for it was

a giant task which Mahomet bequeathed to those entrusted with the regulation of his inheritance. At the very outset loomed up the difficulties in the capital itself. The sacred personality of the prophet had succeeded in holding in check the old antipathies within the ranks of the Medina allies (Anṣār) and the continual petty jealousies between these and the Muhājirūn, the companions of his flight from Mecca. But on his death, which for the great majority was sudden and unexpected, these two groups confronted each other, each claiming the right to take up the lead. As soon as the news of the death first reached them the Khazraj, the most numerous tribe of the Anṣār, assembled in the hall (Sakīfa) of the Banū Sā'ida. Informed of this by the Aus, who feared a revival of the old dissensions, Abū Bakr, Omar and Abū 'Ubaida at once repaired thither and arrived just in time to prevent a split in the community. The hot-blooded Omar wanted to put a stop to it promptly and by energetic means, and would of a certainty have spoiled the whole situation, but at this stage the venerable and awe-inspiring Abū Bakr, the oldest companion of the prophet, intervened and whilst fully recognising the merits of the Anṣār insisted on the election of one of the Qurayshite companions of the prophet as leader of the community. He proposed Omar or Abū 'Ubaida. The proposal did not meet with success and the discussion became more and more excited; suddenly Omar seized the hand of Abū Bakr and rendered homage to him, and others followed his example. In the meantime the hall and adjoining rooms had become filled with people belonging, not to either of the main groups, but to the fluctuating population of Muslim Arabs of the neighbourhood, who had in the preceding years become especially numerous in Medina, and whose main interest was that matters should remain *in statu quo*. These people really turned the scales, and thus Abū Bakr was chosen by a minority and recognised on the following day by the community, though unwillingly, as even tradition is unable to veil, on the part of many. They rendered homage to him as the representative (Khalīfa) of the prophet. The term Caliph was at that time not regarded as a title, but simply as a designation of office; Omar, the successor of Abū Bakr, is said to have been the first to assume the distinctive title "Commander of the Faithful," Amīr al-Mu'minīn, rendered by the Greek papyri as ἀμυραλμονμνίν.

The election of Abū Bakr was doubtless a fortunate one, but it was regarded in circles closely interested as an inexcusable *coup de main*. Quite apart from the fact that the Anṣār had failed to carry their point and were accordingly in bad humour, the nearer relations of the prophet and their more intimate companions appear to have carried out a policy of obstruction which yielded only to force. Ali, the husband of the prophet's daughter Fātima and father of the prophet's grandsons Ḥasan and Ḥusain, who had previously held the first claim to the supreme position, was suddenly ousted from the front rank. His

uncle 'Abbās and probably also Ṭalḥa and Zubair (two of the earliest converts to Islām) allied themselves with him. Ali was a good swordsman but not a man of cautious action or quick resolve. He and those nearest to him appear to have had no other object in view than to gather around the corpse of the prophet while the fight for the succession was raging without. The news of Abū Bakr's election however roused them at last from their lethargy, and thereupon ensued an act of revenge, shrouded certainly in mystery by Muslim tradition, but which cannot be obliterated; the body of the prophet was secretly buried during the same night below the floor of his death-chamber. It was the custom, after pronouncing the benediction over the coffin, to carry the dead in solemn procession through the town to the cemetery. As however this procession would have simultaneously formed the triumphal entry of the new ruler, the body was disposed of as quickly as possible without the knowledge of Abū Bakr or the other leading companions. Tradition, which represents the old companions as working together in pure friendship and unanimity, has endeavoured with much care to picture these remarkable occurrences as legal. For instance Mahomet is said to have stated previously that prophets should always be buried at the spot where they died. To the modern historian however this episode unveils the strong passions and deep antipathies which divided, not only the Meccans and the Medina faction, but also the nearest companions of the prophet. Abū Bakr's rule was but feebly established, and a dissolution of the young realm would have been inevitable had not the pure instinct of self-preservation forced the opposing parties into unity.

The news of the death appeared to let loose all the centrifugal forces of the new State. According to Muslim accounts all Arabia was already subjected and converted to Islām; and as soon as the news of Mahomet's death was known, many of the tribes seceded from Islām and had to be again subjected in bloody wars and reconverted. This apostasy is termed *Ridda*, a change of belief, a well-known term of the later law of Islām. In reality Mahomet, at the time of his death, had by no means united Arabia, much less had he converted all the country to Islām. Not quite all of what to-day forms the Turkish province of Ḥijāz, that is the central portion of the west coast of Arabia with its corresponding back-country, was in reality politically joined with Medina and Mecca as a united power, and even this was held together more by interest than by religious brotherhood. The tribes of Central Arabia, *e.g.* the Ghaṭafān, Bāhila, Ṭayyi', Asad, etc., were in a state of somewhat lax dependence on Mahomet and had probably also partially accepted the doctrine of Islām, whilst in the Christian district to the north and in Yamāma, which had its own prophet, and in the south and east of the peninsula Mahomet either had no connexions whatever or had made treaties with single or isolated tribes, *i.e.* with a

weak minority. It was inexplicable to the subsequent historians of the Arabian State that after the death of Mahomet so many wars were necessary on Arabian soil; they accounted for this fact by a *Ridda*, an apostasy, from Islām. The death of the prophet was doubtless a reason for secession to all those who had unwillingly followed Mahomet's lead, or who regarded their contracts as void on his death. The majority of those regarded as secessionists (Ahl ar-Ridda) had however previously never been adherents of the religion, and many had not even belonged to the political State of Islām. It has but recently been recognised that an intelligible history of the expansion of the Arabs is only possible by making these wars against the *Ridda* the starting-point from which the great invasions developed themselves, more from internal necessity than through any wise direction from Medina — undertakings moreover from the enormous extent of which even the optimism of Mahomet would have flinched.

The movement in Arabia had received through the formation of the State of Medina a new and powerful stimulation. Mahomet's campaigns, with their rich booty, had allured many from afar. He had moreover, as a great diplomatist, strengthened the opposition where he could find no direct acknowledgment. His example alone had also its effect. Should not the prophet of the Banū Hānifa, of the Asad, or of the Tamīm be able to do what the Meccan *Nabī* had done? In this way prophetism gained ground in Arabia, *i.e.* the tension already existing grew until it neared an outburst. The sudden death of Mahomet gave new support to the centrifugal tendencies. The character of the whole movement, as it forces itself on the notice of the historian, was of course hidden from contemporaries. Arabia would have sunk into particularism if the necessity caused by the secession of the Ahl ar-Ridda had not developed in the State of Medina an energy which carried all before it. The fight against the *Ridda* was not a fight against apostates; the objection was not to Islām *per se* but to the tribute which had to be paid to Medina; the fight was for the political supremacy over Arabia; and its natural result was the extension of the dominions of the prophet, not their restoration. With such a distribution of the Arabian element as has been described it was only in the nature of things that the fight must make itself felt moreover beyond the boundaries of Arabia proper.

Only a few of the tribes more nearly connected with Medina recognised the supremacy of Abū Bakr, the others all seceding. Before the news of these secessions reached Medina an expedition, which had been prepared by Mahomet before his death, had already departed for the Syrian border to avenge the defeat at Mu'ta. Medina was therefore quite denuded of troops. A few former allies wished to utilise this precarious position and make a sudden attack on Medina; this however was prevented by Abū Bakr with great energy. Fortunately the expedition

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returned in time to enable him to capture the camp of the insurgents after a severe battle at Dhu-l-Ḳaṣṣa (Aug.-Sept. 632). Khālīd ibn al-Walīd, who had already distinguished himself under Mahomet, was thereupon entrusted with the task of breaking the opposition of the tribes of Central Arabia. Khālīd was without doubt a military genius of the first rank. He was somewhat lax in matters of religion and could be as cruel as his master had been before him; but was a brilliant strategist, carefully weighing his chances; yet once his mind was made up, he was endued with an energy and daring before which all had to yield. He is the actual conqueror of the Ridda, and his good generalship secured victory after victory for Islām.

With a force of about 4000 men he again reduced the Ṭayyi' to obedience, and then in rapid succession routed at Buzākha the Asad and Ghatafān, who had gathered round a prophet called Ṭalḥa, scoffingly styled by the Muslims Ṭulaiḥa, meaning the little Ṭalḥa. Khālīd's success caused fresh troops to flock to his standard. He then at once proceeded further into the territory of the Tamīm, but against the wishes of the Anṣār accompanying him and without the authority of the Caliph. This arbitrary procedure, together with a cruel act of personal revenge which he performed at the last-named place, caused his recall; he was however not only exculpated, but a proposal of his was adopted, to strike a heavy blow at the Banū Ḥanīfa in Yamāma. At this place the prophet Maslama was then ruling, and as in the case of Ṭulaiḥa the Muslims sarcastically formed a diminutive of his name and styled him Musailima. According to tradition this Musailima had maintained friendly relations with Mahomet. Be that as it may, certain it is that he was not in any way subject to Medina in either a political or religious sense, but more probably an imitator of his successful colleague Mahomet. In any case his rule was somewhat firmly established, and it cost Khālīd a bloody battle to destroy his power. This memorable battle was fought at 'Aḳrabā and was without doubt the bloodiest and most important during the whole of the Ridda war. We are as yet but poorly informed in regard to the chronology of these events, but it may probably be assumed that the battle of 'Aḳrabā was fought about one year after the death of the prophet.

By the side of these great successes of Khālīd the campaigns of other generals in Baḥrain, 'Umām, Mahra, Ḥaḍramaut and Yaman are less important. Moreover the earliest subjection of all these lands under the rule of Islām was not carried out by troops specially sent out from Medina; it may even be doubtful if the commanders, with whose names these conquests are associated, were despatched from Medina. It may be that they were only subsequently legalised and that Muḥājir ibn Abī Umayya was the first actual delegate of the Caliph. In any case these districts were unsettled for a long time after the Muslim troops had invaded Syria and the 'Irāq. Further, the same districts were in less than

half a century later almost independent, and later still a focus of heterodox tendencies.

The further march of events is connected, not with these wars but with Khālid's unparalleled succession of victories, and with the complication on the Syrian border. The subjection of Central Arabia to Medina inspired the Arabs of the border districts with a profound respect, but it simultaneously excited the warlike propensities of the most important tribes of Arabia. It would have been an enormous task for the government in Medina to compel all these restless elements, accustomed to marauding excursions, to live side by side in neighbourly peace under the sanctuary of Islām in unfertile Arabia. Within the boundaries of the empire however such fratricidal feuds were henceforth abolished. It was only to be expected that after the withdrawal of Khālid's army a reaction against Medina should seize upon the newly subjected tribes. The necessity of keeping their own victorious troops employed, as also of reconciling the subjected ones to the new conditions, irresistibly compelled an extension of the Islāmitic rule beyond the borders of Arabia. Chronologically the raid on 'Irāk (the ancient Babylonia) stands at the commencement of these enterprises. This however was quite a minor affair, and the main attention of the government was directed to Syria.

Before going further, we have to shew that our exposition differs radically from all the usual descriptions of the expansion of the Arabs, not only in our estimates of the sources and events, but also in our chronological arrangement of them. The conquests of the Saracens have in later years been a focus of scientific debate. Through the labours of De Goeje, Wellhausen and Miednikoff a complete revolution in our views has been effected. We have learnt to differentiate the various schools of tradition, of which that of 'Irāk, represented by Saif ibn Omar, has produced an historical novel which can hardly be classed as actual history. The reports of the Medina and the Syrian schools are more trustworthy, and a certain amount of reliance may be placed on the Egyptian school, but they all suffer from later harmonising efforts, and also from their revision during the period of the Abbasids, in which it was sought in every way to depreciate the Umayyads. All these traditions are now being collected and critically sifted in the stupendous annals of Leone Caetani. His epoch-making results are utilised in the following paragraphs.

Between Yamāma and the Hira district, which we must regard as a long, narrow strip of country, the North Arabian (Ishmaelite) tribe of Bakr ibn Wā'il led a nomadic existence on the borders of the cultivated country, covered by the protecting marshes of the lower Euphrates, and this tribe was again subdivided into various independent minor groups. They formed part of the restless border tribes against which Hira had been erected as a bulwark. The sub-tribe of the Banū Shaibān especially

had brilliant traditions, for it was these people who had won the first and much celebrated victory of the Arabs over Persian regular troops at Dhu Ḳār before the rise of Islām (between 604 and 611). This tribe of the Banū Shaibān and their leader Muthannā ibn Ḥāritha, whose example was followed by the others, induced Khālid and his Muslims to cross the Persian boundary for the first time. That was not a matter of chance, but shews the deep inner connexion of the Saracen expansion with the migration already in being before the rise of Islām. The Shaibān, like all the other components of the Bakr ibn Wā'il, were wholly independent of Medina, and had no intention of becoming Muslims. But when Medina suddenly extended its dominion beyond Yamāma, and all Arabia echoed with the fame of Khālid in warfare, the Bakr found themselves in a dilemma between the rising Arabian great power and their old hereditary enemy, Persia. What could be more obvious than that, simply because they needed a screen for their rear, they should draw the related Muslims into their alliance and with their assistance continue their raids into the cultivated country? Khālid, reckless plunger that he was, seized with avidity this opportunity for fresh deeds of valour. Tradition reports that the chiefs of the Bakr tribes, and of them Muthannā first and foremost, paid a visit to the Caliph Abū Bakr at Medina, professed Islām, and received from Abū Bakr the command to conquer 'Irāk in conjunction with Khālid. In reality it is doubtful whether the Caliph even so much as knew of any connexion between Khālid and the Bakr tribes. At the same time it is not improbable that he gave his consent for Khālid to participate in one of the customary raids of the Bakr ibn Wā'il, but the conversion of the head of the tribes was no part of his plan, much less the conversion of the tribes themselves. They certainly from this time onward were in touch with Medina, and regarded themselves as in political alliance with the Muslims; and in the rapid developments of the next few years they were merged in the Caliph's dominions. Abū Bakr did not at first contemplate any systematic occupation of 'Irāk, for he was at that time considering an expedition against Syria, which from the point of view of Medina was of infinitely greater importance. Even at that time they desired to have Khālid in Syria; but he had in any case already taken part in the raid of the Banū Shaibān, either with or without the knowledge of the Caliph. How little any conquest of Persia was contemplated is shewn by the fact that the main body of Khālid's troops was ordered home to recruit, and he undertook his first invasion of Persian territory with only about 500 men, certainly well-selected troops, and then continued his march further with the same contingent into Syria.

Khālid attracted volunteers of all kinds from Central Arabia, and marched with them westward of the Euphrates to avoid the marshes; at Khaffān he effected a junction with the Bakr under Muthannā; their combined forces amounted in all to only two to three thousand men, but

they had fortune on their side. They crossed the fertile land to the north of Ḥira unmolested and plundering as they went; Ullais was also put under contribution, and suddenly they appeared before Ḥira. The town was well fortified, but the garrison was palpably insufficient for an open battle. And what was the use of resistance within the walls if their rich lands around were to be desolated? Thinking thus they quickly resolved to pay a ransom, especially as the Arabs only demanded the ridiculously small sum of 60,000 *dirhams*. To the Arabs this seemed an enormous booty. Elated with victory they withdrew, and Ḥira was thus saved for the time being. It is scarcely conceivable that the payment of this sum was regarded as an annual tribute. After this expedition Khālid marched on with his braves, by command of the Caliph, right through the enemy's territory, appearing in all directions with lightning speed and disappearing again with equal rapidity, from Ḥira through Palmyra to Syria where he appeared, suddenly and unexpectedly, under the walls of Damascus. This expedition, so woven round with legendary lore, and apart from that a military masterpiece, shews better than anything else that the conquest of Persia was not premeditated, and that the Muslims were making their main effort in Syria. The raid against Ḥira was made at a time of the greatest confusion in Persia, but few months after the accession of Yezdegerd, when the central authority was to some extent restored by his general Rustam. Thereupon a counter-raid was prepared against the plunderers. Muthannā sought help from Medina. This was in the early days of Omar's government, and he granted the request only with a certain amount of reluctance, refusing to spare his best troops from Syria. The combined troops of the Bakr and of Medina were few and badly handled, and in a second expedition they were almost annihilated; in the so-called Bridge battle Muthannā saved with difficulty the remnants of the Muslim army (26 Nov. 634). It was in consequence of this disaster that Omar, a year later (635), was led to a more energetic interference in the conditions of the 'Irāq, but even then his actions were somewhat dilatory. Of this it will be necessary to speak later, if only briefly. For a history of the Middle Ages the expansion of the Arabs in Mediterranean territories is of much greater importance.

The Arabian records of these events are not only distorted by lies, but are terribly confused: especially in their chronology. Fortunately we are better informed through some of the Byzantine writers, especially Theophanes. It was not the sagacity of the Caliphs, wanting to conquer the world, that flung the Muslim host on Syria, but the Christian Arabs of the border districts who applied to the powerful organisation of Medina for assistance. We are told very little about the relations between Mahomet and the great tribes of North Arabia, such as the Judhām, Kalb, Ẓuḡā'a, Lakhm, Ghassān; but the defeat of Mu'ta shews that they were enemies of Medina. It was only the expedition

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against Tabūk, which had to be subjected two years before the death of the prophet, that created friendly relations with at least a few of the tribes on the southern boundary of Palestine. In the war of conquest the great tribes of the former boundary State of the Ghassānids still fought on the side of the Byzantines. The tribes to the south of the Dead Sea however, such as the Judhām and ẖudā'a, who commanded the route from Medina to Gaza, had every reason for connecting themselves more closely with Medina. Previously they had been in the pay of the Byzantines, and being moreover Christians, they had no intention of allying themselves with the Muslims. Soon after the battle of Mu'ta however, we are informed, the Emperor Heraclius, who at that time was in great financial difficulties owing to the debt contracted with the Church for the great Persian war, suspended the yearly subsidies to the Bedouins on the southern boundary, probably thinking that with the new political situation he might venture on this economy. At that time even a far-seeing politician could not have regarded as serious the organisation of the ever-divided Arabs living in the interior of Arabia. Judging by the behaviour of the northern tribes, they continued for a time to be paid. Theophanes even treats the suspension of subsidies as being in some way the cause of the summoning of the Muslims. Apart from this may be added that, after the victories of Khālid in Central Arabia, these border tribes, like the Bakr ibn Wā'il in the East, were led into a dilemma; as Byzantium withdrew the subsidies from them it was only natural that they made an alliance with the Muslims to recoup themselves by plundering raids.

Their suggestion met with the approval of the Caliph, who probably recognised that the commotion which had been raised must be diverted in some direction or other. The Medina people themselves, according to Arabian reports, do not appear to have at first displayed any enthusiasm for such a risky action; probably they had not forgotten the disaster of Mu'ta. Nevertheless in the autumn of 633 various small detachments were sent off into Syria, the first under Yazīd ibn Abī Sufyān, a brother of the subsequent Caliph Mu'āwiya, the second under Shurahbīl ibn Ḥasana, the third under 'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ. The first two bodies of troops, probably co-operating most of the time, took the direct track via Tabūk-Ma'ān; 'Amr marched along the coast via Aila ('Aqaba); other smaller companies followed later and pushed forward from the South into the country east of the Jordan. The first to get engaged in battle was Yazīd. Approaching from westward he ascended the hills surmounting the Wādī 'Araba, the great valley south of the Dead Sea, and surprised several thousands of Byzantine troops under the Patricius of Caesarea, named Sergius. These were routed and compelled to retire on Gaza; before reaching this town however they were overtaken (4 Feb. 634) by the Arabs and annihilated, Sergius also losing his life. After this success Yazīd again retired beyond the protecting Dead Sea. Shortly

afterwards 'Amr put in an appearance, coming from Aila with fresh troops, which had been further strengthened on the way by recruits. They raided the whole of southern Palestine as far as Gaza, and 'Amr in fact on one occasion pushed forward into the district of *Kaisāriya* (Caesarea).

Upon hearing of these surprising events the Emperor Heraclius, who at that time was still dwelling at Emesa, in northern Syria, concentrated a great army to the south of Damascus, and placed it under the command of his brother Theodorus. It was unusually difficult for the Greeks to recognise any plan of attack on the part of the Arabs; these simply advanced without any definite aim; the leader of each detachment went whithersoever he listed, and whither he conceived the greatest amount of booty was available. Possibly the troops of Theodorus may have destroyed a small detachment of the Arabs in the country east of the Jordan, but in any case they advanced very slowly in a southerly direction, where the greatest danger threatened, for Jerusalem was temporarily cut off from the sea, and even Caesarea and Gaza were threatened. Immediately after this advance Khālid, approaching in their rear from the Euphrates, suddenly appeared before Damascus (24 April 634). He remained unmolested, because all available troops were then on the way to the South. Clever strategist that he was, and without the selfish greed for plunder of the other leaders, Khālid at once recognised the precarious position of the Arabs in the southern part of Palestine. Advancing down the country east of Jordan he succeeded, probably with the utmost difficulty, in effecting a junction with the detachments in the South, engaged in their own selfish interests. Finally, in the Wādī 'Araba, he united with 'Amr and Yazīd, who were retiring before the approaching Byzantines. This effected, the combined forces of the Muslims once more advanced against Theodorus, who had occupied a strong position at Ajnādāin, or better Jannābatain, between Jerusalem and Gaza. On 30 July 634 a bloody battle ensued, terminating in a brilliant victory for the Arabs. Who commanded the Arabs, or whether in fact they had any commander-in-chief, remains a matter of doubt, but it is probably not wide of the mark to recognise the actual victor in Khālid. Hereupon all Palestine lay open to the Arabs, *i.e.* all the flat country; the well-fortified towns, even though without large garrisons, held out for a considerable time longer. The Arabs, who still regarded themselves as being out on a plundering expedition, probably spared the resident population less than they did later, when the systematic occupation took place. Report states that Gaza also fell at this time, but this simply means that Gaza was laid under contribution in the same way that Hīra had been before. The Patriarch Sophronius of Jerusalem, in his Christmas sermon at the end of the year 634, describes in moving terms the doleful condition of the country. Anarchy appears to have ruled supreme. The Arabs dispersed themselves throughout the country, and even pushed forward far towards the North; the temporary

appearance of the Arabs before Emesa in January 635 is credibly authenticated by a Syrian source.

During the six months following the battle of Ajnādain the tone of public opinion must have undergone a considerable change. Men of the rank of Khālid and 'Amr could not but perceive that they could not go on with such planless raids; a systematic occupation of the country appeared urgent. In addition to this the Caliph Abū Bakr died soon after the battle of Ajnādain (634) and the energetic far-seeing Omar had been nominated by him as his successor and recognised on all sides without question. This new view was further supported both at the front and at head-quarters by the continued pressing forward of the Arab element from the south of the peninsula; after the termination of the Ridda wars these people, incited by the unparalleled successes of the Medina people, also marched to Syria. These new arrivals did not however arrive in the form of organised troops, but advanced in tribes, bringing their wives and children with them and hoping to find in the new land fertile residential areas. This process is very difficult to record in detail, and doubtless extended over several years. It was only after the battle of the Yarmūk that the Arabs really began seriously to take in hand the administration of the country. But within six months of the battle of Ajnādain there began a much more systematic progress of the Arabs, who were now clearly placed under the supreme command of Khālid. The last troops of Heraclius had now withdrawn to Damascus, the defeated Theodorus had been recalled to Constantinople, and the conduct of further operations lay in the hands of Baanes, who concentrated his troops in the beginning of 635 at Fihl, a strategically important position situated south of the Sea of Gennesareth and covering the crossing of the Jordan and the route to Damascus. By cutting dykes he endeavoured to prevent the advance of the Arabs. Impressed however probably by their slowly changing conception of the task before them and led by Khālid, the Muslims forced the position at Fihl (23 Jan. 635) and immediately afterwards took possession of Baisān (Bethshan). They then pushed forward determinedly towards Damascus. Baanes again opposed their advance at Marj aṣ-Ṣuffar (25 Feb. 635) but was defeated and two weeks later the Muslims were before the gates of Damascus.

The Arabs were not in a position properly to lay siege to the town, for they were quite ignorant of this kind of warfare. They were compelled therefore to endeavour to isolate the town, and so to exasperate the residents as to cause them to compel the garrison to surrender. It was however not until the early autumn (Aug.-Sept.) that the town capitulated, after Heraclius had endeavoured in vain on several occasions to relieve it; in one of the abortive attempts he had however inflicted on the Arabs a rather serious reverse. The capitulation ensued at last palpably through the treachery of the civil authorities, assisted by the Bishop and the tax-collector. After the fall of Damascus the Arabs

proceeded to the pacification of the conquered country, without giving further heed to the Byzantines, from whom they did not consider they had anything more to fear. The various leaders operated in Palestine and the country east of the Jordan; Khālid himself pressed forward once more against Emesa, and occupied this place at the close of the year 635. A number of smaller towns hereupon opened their gates to the conquerors whilst the larger fortresses such as Jerusalem, Caesarea, and the coastal towns, still held out in hope of rescue by Heraclius.

Heraclius certainly as yet had no intention of giving up the country to the Arabs. He shewed a feverish activity in Antioch and Edessa. Together with the customary Byzantine mercenaries, Armenians and Arabs formed the main body of his new army, which he placed under the command of Theodorus Trithurius, and in which Baanes had the control of an independent division. The relief of Damascus not having been effected, Heraclius permitted the winter months to pass, intending when he was so much the better prepared to take the offensive and strike a crushing blow against the Arabs. In the spring of 636 this new army unexpectedly approached Emesa, where Khālid was on outpost duty. He at once recognised his dangerous position. Hitherto the Arabs had always fought against an inferior Byzantine force, but now they were suddenly opposed by a powerful army which, even after making all allowance for Arab exaggeration, must have amounted to some 50,000 men. Khālid immediately relinquished not only Emesa but even Damascus and caused all the Arab fighting forces to be concentrated at a point between the northern and southern positions of the Arabs in the country east of the Jordan, to the south-east of the deep Yarmūk valley, and to the north of what is now known as Der'āt, a point admirably adapted to his purpose. Here the Arabs were in the most fertile part of Syria, where the most important highways crossed leading to the southern portion of the country east of the Jordan and to Central Palestine; they were moreover protected in the rear by the deeply hollowed valleys of the Yarmūk tributaries. Should they be defeated here a retreat was under all circumstances secured either into the desert or to Medina. The hurried retirement of the Arabs to this district proves how critical affairs appeared to them: against the huge advancing army of the enemy, they could only oppose about 25,000, scarcely half the number.

The Roman army did not approach by way of Damascus but through Coelesyria and across the Jordan, and probably took up their position near Jillīn, the Jillīk of the sources. The two armies must have remained confronting each other for a considerable period: the Arabs were waiting for reinforcements, whilst the Byzantine army was hampered by the petty jealousies of its leaders and by insubordination in the ranks. Several battles were fought in which Theodorus appears to have been at the outset defeated and Baanes was then proclaimed emperor by the troops. The Arabian auxiliaries deserted,

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and under all these circumstances the Arabs had no longer cause to fear the numerical superiority of their opponents. They appear to have outflanked the Byzantines from the eastern side, cut their line of communication with Damascus, and by occupying the bridge over the Wādi-r-Ruḳḳād frustrated also their chances of retreat to the westward. Finally they forced them into the angle between the Yarmūk and the Wādi-r-Ruḳḳād. Those who were not killed here plunged down into the steep and deeply cut beds of the rivers, and those of the latter who had finally managed to escape across the rivers to Jakutha were annihilated by the Arabs on the other side, as, by occupying the bridge, they were enabled with ease to cross the Wādi-r-Ruḳḳād. The decisive stroke in these fights, extending over months, happened on 20 Aug. 636. With this terrible defeat of the Byzantines on the Yarmūk the fate of Syria was permanently decided. The last troops of Heraclius, collected with much trouble, had been thus completely destroyed, and the immediate advance of the Arabs on Damascus rendered impossible every attempt to collect others. Thus Damascus was occupied a second time by the Arabs in the autumn of the same year, and this time finally.

The government of Medina had, as we have already seen, attempted for about the space of a year to introduce a systematic occupation of the country in place of the former planless raids. This policy made it necessary that the army of occupation should have a supreme commandant, who should at the same time act as vicegerent of the Caliph. At the outset Khālid, who on account of his qualities had acquired the senior rank, was confirmed in this position, but in the brilliant general there was entirely wanting the diplomatic art of a pacificator attaining his ends by statesmanlike compromises. For this position one of the foremost men of the theocracy was required, an absolute confidant of the Caliph. Omar selected Abū 'Ubaida, one of the oldest and most esteemed of his companions, of whom we know that, for instance at the death of the prophet, he had played an important part. His task in face of the autocratic army-leaders was a difficult one; he arrived in Syria just before the battle of the Yarmūk, but was prudent enough to leave at this critical stage the supreme command for this battle to Khālid, who was so minutely acquainted with the conditions. Thereupon however he himself intervened, distributed the various military commandants throughout the entire land, and then personally advanced, in company with Khālid, towards the North. Baalbek, Emesa, Aleppo, Antioch, and the Arabian tribes residing in the north of Syria put no difficulties in the way of the conquest. The town of Ẓinnasrīn (Kalchis) alone was less easily dealt with. From northern Syria 'Iyād ibn Ghanm was then subsequently detached to the East, and he subjected Mesopotamia (639-646) without meeting with much opposition. To the North, however, the Amanus formed for centuries the more or less constant boundary of the Caliph's dominions.

In the meantime, *i.e.* in the course of the years 636 and 637, Shurahbil and Yazid had finally occupied the remainder of the interior, and most of the towns on the coast. 'Amr was less fortunate, and invested Jerusalem in vain. The stubborn Caesarea also remained for a time closed to the Arabs. It is no matter of chance that just these two strongly Hellenised towns should have held out. Their resistance gives us a clue to explain the rapid successes of the Arabs. The military power of the Emperor was certainly broken, and he lacked both men and money; but it was of much greater moment that everywhere in Syria, where Semites dwelt, the Byzantine rule was so deeply hated that the Arabs were welcomed as deliverers, as soon as there was no need further to fear Heraclius. To cover his enormous debts Heraclius had been compelled to put on the fiscal screw to its utmost tension. In addition to this domestic pressure there was added that of religion; the church policy of Heraclius, the introduction of the Monotheletic Irenicon, became a persecution of Monophysites and Jews. In addition to this religious division there was now further the natural reaction of the Semitic element against the foreign rule of the Greeks. In the Muslims on the other hand the numerous Christian Arab tribes, and even the Aramaeans too, welcomed blood relations; the tribute moreover demanded by the Arabs was not heavy, and finally the Arabs permitted complete religious freedom; in fact, for political reasons, they rather encouraged heterodox tendencies. Thus, after the Arabs had vanquished the tyrants, the land fell peacefully into their own possession. The resistance of Jerusalem and Caesarea affords the test of this theory, for both of these towns were entirely Hellenic and orthodox. Even these towns however were unable to maintain their position for any length of time, and Jerusalem capitulated as early as 638; Caesarea did not fall until October 640 into the hands of Mu'āwiya, and then only through treachery.

Even before the fall of Jerusalem the Caliph Omar had paid a visit to Syria. His appearance there was the result of the policy of occupation followed by Medina. The head-quarters of the Muslim army was at that time still at Jābiya, a little to the north of the Yarmūk battle-field. To this spot Omar summoned all his military commanders, presumably to support Abū 'Ubaida in his difficult task with the authority of the Caliph. Apart from this however it was desired to lay down uniform principles for the treatment of the subjected peoples, *i.e.* to define the difficult problem which we of modern times call native policy. Further, the disposition of the money coming in and the whole administration needed an initial regulation, or rather sanction. Later tradition considers Omar the founder of the theoretical system of the ideal Muslim State, but incorrectly so, as will be shewn later. At the same time an initial regulation then certainly took place. On the termination of his work of reorganisation Omar visited Jerusalem,

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proceeding thence on his return journey to Medina. Abū 'Ubaida remained in the country as Omar's representative, but was not destined to remain in office much longer, for in the year 639, when many thousands from the ranks of the victors succumbed to a fearful epidemic of plague, Abū 'Ubaida was also carried off by it, as was also his successor in office, Yazīd, a short time later. Yazīd's brother, Mu'āwiya ibn Abī Sufyān, was then nominated to the succession by Omar, and in him the man appears at the head of Syria who was destined later in his own person to transfer the Caliphate to Damascus, a development which in its slow preparation is as clear as noonday.

The whole course of the Muslim expeditions in 'Irāk shews that the policy of the Caliphs was entirely determined by consideration for Syria. After the unfortunate battle of the Bridge not only the government but also the tribes were still more cautious towards 'Irāk expeditions. It was only the eager efforts of Muthannā, of the Bakr tribe, that finally succeeded in gaining the sanction of the Caliph to a new raid, and then only after the first conquest of Damascus. But there was a dearth of warriors; none cared much to proceed to 'Irāk, and it was only on the grant of special privileges that a few Yamanites consented to prepare for the march. In the meantime the Persians, who for over a year had not followed up their advantage in the battle of the Bridge, had crossed the Euphrates under Mihrān; but Muthannā, with his auxiliaries from Medina, succeeded in defeating them at Buwaib (Oct. or Nov. 635). With his weak forces he could not however think of following up this small victory, and Omar at that time required all available troops for Syria, where the great army of Heraclius was advancing towards the battle of the Yarmūk. It was not until after this latter decisive victory that the Caliph paid greater attention to the 'Irāk. Here also the first thing to be done was the despatch of a general representative, or vicegerent, for which position Sa'd ibn Abī Waqqāṣ was selected. To get the necessary troops however for an energetic attack was still attended with great difficulty. Sa'd took the whole of the winter 636–637 to assemble a few thousand men around him. Of the Arabian hordes, incited by religious enthusiasm, according to the customary European traditions, we can find but little trace.

In the meantime the Persians, alarmed by their own defeat at Buwaib, and still more by the terrible collapse of the Byzantine rule in Syria, decided to take energetic steps against the Arabs. The administrator of the kingdom, Rustam, assumed the command personally, and crossed the Euphrates. On the borders of the cultivated land, at Kādisiya, Sa'd and Rustam stood for a long time facing each other. Of the size of their respective armies we know nothing positive; the Arabs were certainly not more than 5–6000 strong, including Christians and heathens, and the numerical superiority of the Persians cannot have been considerable. More by chance than from any tactical initiative the two armies became

engaged in combat, and in one day the Persian army was routed, and its leaders slain (May-June 637).

And now the fertile black land (Sawād) of 'Irāk lay open to the Arabs. Conditions exactly similar to those in Syria caused the Aramaic peasants to greet the Arabs as deliverers. Without meeting with any noteworthy opposition the Saracens pushed on as far as the Tigris, whither they were attracted by the rich treasures of the Persian capital Ctesiphon, or as the Arabs called it the "city-complex" or Madā'in. The right bank of the Tigris was abandoned and the floating bridges broken up. A ford having been disclosed to the Arabs the residue of the garrison followed in the wake of Yezdegerd and his court, who immediately after the battle had sought the protection of the Iranian mountains. The city opened its gates and fabulous booty fell into the hands of the Arabs. After a few weeks of quiet and no doubt somewhat barbaric enjoyment, they had again to make one more stand on the fringe of the mountains at Jalūlā; this also ended victoriously for them, and with that the whole of 'Irāk was thus in their hands. Here also it was no matter of chance that the expansion of the Arabs first came to a standstill at the mountains, where the line was drawn between the Semitic and the Aryan elements of the population. Only the province of Khūzistān, the ancient Elam, caused some trouble still. Hither the Arabs appear to have proceeded from the south of the marsh district, when the insignificant raids of the boundary tribes there, encouraged by Medina, assumed after the battle of Qādisiyya a more serious character, starting from the newly founded base at Baṣra. The chief seat of government was not placed at Ctesiphon, but, by express command of the Caliph, at Kūfa (near Ḥīra): and this was developed into a great Arabian military camp, intended to form the main citadel of Muslim Arabianism as against foreign Persian culture. Later the ancient Baṣra attained an independent position alongside of Kūfa. The rivalry of the two places sets its impress both on the politics and on the intellectual life of the following century.

It was not until after these stupendous victories of Yarmūk and Qādisiyya that the great Arabian migrations assumed their full development, for now even those tribes who were but little disposed to Islām were compelled to wander forth in order to seek their happiness in those cultivated lands which as rumour told them were only to be compared with Paradise itself. Now it was that the momentous change took place to which reference has been made at the outset; now it was that Islām no longer represented dependence on Medina, as it did in the time of Mahomet and Abū Bakr, but from this time forward it represented the ideal of the common universal empire of the Arabs. And at this stage the further expeditions became systematic conquests, in which usually whole tribes participated. A first step in this direction was to round off the empire, combining the Syrian and 'Irāk provinces by

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the conquest of Mesopotamia. The expedition, begun from Syria as a starting-point, was completed from 'Irāk by the capture of Mauṣil (Mosul) (641).

A systematic conquest of this description was especially called for in regard to 'Irāk; for this province could not be regarded as secure as long as its recovery might be attempted. And at this juncture a strong reaction against the Arabs actually set in. The opposition which the Baṣrīs in Khūzistān met with, and which only ceased on the conquest of Tustar (641), was probably in connexion with the activity of the fleeing Yezdegerd and his followers, who summoned the whole of the Iranians to battle against the Arabs. The Baṣrīs and troops from Kūfa had already co-operated systematically in Khūzistān, and similar tactics followed now on Persian soil, where the decisive battle was fought in the year 641 at Nihāwand in the neighbourhood of the ancient Ekbatana. The Arabs gained a great victory; the dense garland of praise which legendary lore has woven around it shews how much depended for the Muslims on this victory. But even after this victory the Arabs were not yet masters of the great Median towns, as Hamadhān, Rayy and Ispahān; these were but slowly conquered during the next few years. Here in fact, where they were not greeted as deliverers by kindred Semites, the Arabs had to withstand a stubborn national opposition. Yezdegerd himself certainly caused them no difficulties; after the battle of Nihāwand he had fled further and further away and had finally gone from Istakhr to Marw in Khorāsān. His satrap there was too narrow-minded to support his fallen superior, and in fact he treated him as an enemy, and in 651-652 the deserted and unfortunate potentate appears to have been assassinated.

The Arabs did not reach Khorāsān until the province of Fārs, the actual Persia, was conquered. Fārs could be reached most conveniently from the Persian Gulf. This expedition had therefore been undertaken, with Bahrain as starting-point, soon after the battle of Kādisiya. This made the third base of attack, together with Ctesiphon (Kūfa) and Baṣra, from which the Arabs pushed forward into Iran. Later on the conduct of this expedition passed into the hands of the troops coming from Baṣra. But also in Fārs the same stubborn resistance was met with, which was not broken till after the conquest of Istakhr in the year 649-650 by 'Abdallāh ibn 'Amir. Following this up 'Abdallāh, especially assisted by the Tamīm and Bakr tribes, began in the following year an advance, the first successful one, towards Khorāsān. This first and incomplete conquest of Persia took therefore more than ten years, whilst Syria and 'Irāk fell in an astonishingly short time into the hands of the Arabs. In Persia Arabianism has never become national, and, whilst a few centuries later the other countries spoke the Arabian tongue, the Persian vernacular and the national traditions were still maintained in Persia. The religion of Islām moreover underwent later in Persia a

development completely differing from the orthodox Islām. Even to-day Persia is the land of the Shī'a.

By reason of the great conquests in Syria and 'Irāk the capital, Medina, was no longer the centre of the new empire. Byzantine Egypt lay close by, and from Egypt a reconquest of Syria, even an attack on Medina itself, might be regarded as by no means impossible. Besides Alexandria the town of Klysma (Kulzum, Suez) appears to have been a strong naval port. Probably all Egypt was then an important base for the fleet of the Byzantines and one of their principal dockyards; for the Arabians of the earlier times it decidedly became such, and it appears not improbable that their conquest of Egypt was connected with the recognition that only the possession of a fleet would ensure the lasting retention of the new acquisitions, the Syrian coast towns, for instance. After the fruitless efforts to take Caesarea this recognition was a matter of course. Apart from this Egypt, a land rich in corn, must have been a more desirable land for the central government than the distant 'Irāk or Mesopotamia, for we find that soon after the conquest the growing needs of Medina were supplied by regular imports of corn from Egypt. It is therefore without doubt a non-historical conception, when an Arabian source represents Egypt as having been conquered against the wishes of the Caliph. The conquest of Egypt falls in a period during which the occupation of new territories was carried out systematically, instead of by the former more or less casual raids.

How much this undertaking was helped by the conditions in Egypt at the time was probably scarcely imagined in the Muslim camp. After the victories of Heraclius a strong Byzantine reaction had followed the Persian rule, which had lasted about ten years. Heraclius needed money, as we have already seen, and further, he hoped by means of a formula of union to put an end to the perpetual sectarian discord between the Monophysites and their opponents, and thereby to give to the reunited kingdom one sole church. But the parties were already too strongly embittered one against the other, and the religious division had already been connected so closely with the political that the Irenicon remained without effect. The Monophysite Egyptians probably never understood the proposed Monothelete compromise at all, and always thought that it was desired to force the hated Chalcedonian belief on them. It was certainly no apostle of peace who brought the Irenicon to the Egyptians, but a grand-inquisitor of the worst type. Soon after the re-occupation of Egypt Heraclius, in the autumn of 631, sent Cyrus, the former bishop of Phasis in the Caucasus, to Alexandria as Patriarch, and at the same time as head of the entire civil administration. In a struggle extending over ten years this man sought by the severest means to convert the Coptic Church to the Irenicon; the Coptic form of worship was forbidden, and its priests and organisations were cruelly persecuted. As if that were not sufficient the same man, as a support of the financial

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administration, was compelled to add considerably to the burden of taxation, in order to assist in paying the debts of the Emperor already referred to. It is no wonder that this dreaded imperial representative and Patriarch appeared to later Coptic tradition to be the veritable Antichrist. Most of all he was blamed for surrendering Egypt to the Muslims. This Cyrus is in fact, if we are not greatly deceived, the actual personage from whom the main traits of the figure of the Muḳauḳis, so surrounded by legendary lore of Muslim tradition, are taken. The problem of the Muḳauḳis is one of the most difficult ones in the whole history of the conquest of Egypt, which is throughout studded with problems. To the Arabians the Muḳauḳis represents the ruler of Egypt, who concludes with them the capitulation treaties. This was however without doubt Cyrus, for numerous other isolated statements in the legend of the Muḳauḳis apply to him, although other historical personages appear to have been confused with him. The study of Coptic tradition first solved the problem in so far as it identified the Muḳauḳis unhesitatingly with Cyrus. Whether in this obscure name a Byzantine title, a nickname, or a designation of descent is hidden, must remain for the present unelucidated.

The conqueror of Egypt was 'Amr ibn al-ʿĀṣ, already known to us from the Syrian campaign, a man of great personal authority in the theocracy, but by no means a sanctimonious man, and perhaps less a great general, even if he gained his laurels, than an excellent organiser and a Machiavellian politician, with strong traces of heathenism and of genuine Arabian egotism. In December 639 'Amr appeared on the eastern boundary, at that time rather denuded of troops, and about a month later conquered Pelusium (Jan. 640) with only 3-4000 men. 'Amr was unable to venture on a decisive battle until reinforcements to the number of about 5000 had joined him under the leadership of Zubair, the celebrated companion of the prophet. With these he defeated the Byzantines, commanded by the Augustalis Theodorus, in the battle of Heliopolis (July 640), this being followed up quickly by the occupation of one of the suburbs of Babylon, not far distant from the Cairo of to-day. Babylon was not the capital of Egypt, it is true, but owing to its commanding position at the head of the delta leading towards Alexandria it was the most important position in the country, and was correspondingly well fortified. The citadel of Babylon held out accordingly for a considerable time still. Cyrus, who appears to have been besieged there, entered into negotiation with 'Amr, in spite of rather strong opposition to this course in his own camp, and then quitted Egypt to obtain from the Emperor a ratification of the provisional treaty agreed upon with 'Amr. Heraclius was incensed to the utmost; and Cyrus was accused of treachery and banished. Shortly afterwards (11 Feb. 641), the Emperor died. The relief of Babylon now appeared impossible: even before this the most pernicious intrigues with the Muslims had been carried on in Egypt, and

now it was plainly to be seen that the death of the Emperor would fan into new life old passions — which in fact actually occurred. During the next few years the idea of any strong advance against the Saracens could not be entertained. Thus the citadel of Babylon capitulated in April 641. Therewith the eastern Delta and Upper Egypt lay in the hands of 'Amr. He thereupon crossed the Nile and, following the western branch of the river, advanced slowly towards Alexandria, capturing on his way the episcopal see of Nikiou, which capitulated on 13 May. Treachery and fear smoothed the way for him, but nevertheless he appears to have met with quite energetic opposition near Alexandria. He was, it is true, able to obtain possession temporarily of the vicinity of the town, but for the time being there could be no idea of subduing the great, strong Alexandria. As to the slow extension of the Muslim power in the remainder of Egypt we are not very well informed.

In the confusion following on the death of Heraclius the war party, represented as regards Egypt by the Augustalis Theodorus, appears to have gained the supremacy in Constantinople; then however, probably at the instigation of the Empress Martina, who was weary of the perpetual wars with the Saracens, Cyrus was again despatched to Egypt to arrange a capitulation with 'Amr under the most favourable conditions. Cyrus returned to Alexandria (14 Sept. 641) and his further policy is not quite clear. In any case, contrary to his former actions, he was most compliant to the Copts, and it is not improbable that he aimed at an Egyptian primacy under Arabian suzerainty. In the autumn, without the knowledge of the Alexandrians, he concluded the definite treaty with 'Amr, in accordance with which the city was to be evacuated by the Greeks not later than 17 Sept. 642, but for a stipulated tribute the residents were guaranteed their personal safety and the safety of their property, together with full freedom in the exercise of their religion. The Patriarch ran some risk of being lynched when this contract first became known, but he then appears to have convinced the people of its expediency. The Greeks quitted the town and it was actually given over to the Saracens at the appointed date. Cyrus did not live to see this, for he died previously (21 March 642). The capital of Egypt having fallen, 'Amr desired also to cover his flank; he therefore undertook in the following winter 642-643 an expedition to the Pentapolis and occupied Barqa without striking a blow.

Alexandria was however no more selected as the seat of the new government than Ctesiphon had previously been chosen for this purpose. The policy of the Caliph was to isolate the Arabian element in the foreign land, and the Saracens therefore built for themselves a city of their own, near to the ancient Babylon, on the eastern bank of the Nile, in a similar way to their procedure at Kūfa and Baṣra; their camp was called by the Greeks "*φóσσarov*," *i.e.* "the camp," which name was transmuted in the Arabian idiom into "*Fūṣṭāt*" (a tent). The list of

the various quarters which has been transmitted to us affords a good idea of the tribes taking part in the conquest of Egypt; for the most part they were from South Arabia. We shall not be inaccurate if we date the commencement of Fūstāṭ even before the evacuation of Alexandria (642).

The conqueror of Egypt met the same fate as his great Syrian colleague Khālīd; Omar did not choose to allow his various lieutenants to become too powerful, unless he was absolutely sure of them. He appears, therefore, shortly before his death to have transferred Upper Egypt as an independent province to 'Abdallāh ibn Sa'd ibn 'Abī Sarḥ. 'Abdallāh was probably more of a financier than a warrior; he remitted more to the central exchequer, but had no personal authority with the troops. After Omar's death Othman placed him also in authority over Lower Egypt, and recalled 'Amr. When however, after the restoration of order in Constantinople, a Byzantine fleet under the command of Manuel suddenly appeared before Alexandria, and the town rose in rebellion (645), 'Abdallāh was helpless. At the instigation of the troops Othman sent back the tried and trusted 'Amr, who in a very short time drove the Byzantines out of the country and retook Alexandria, this time by force, in 646. Immediately after this success however he was compelled again to relinquish the province to 'Abdallāh, as he refused with scorn to retain the military command without the civil administration. Personal enrichment to some extent—and that has always been the principal aim of the heroes of the conquest—was only possible by manipulation of the taxes; and 'Abdallāh was a foster-brother of the Caliph. Still it must be admitted that 'Abdallāh was not without merit, not only in regard to the taxes, but also in the extension of the boundaries. Thus, for instance, he regulated the conditions on the Upper Egyptian border by treaty with the Nubians (April 652), and on the western side he advanced as far as Tripolis. His greatest achievement however was the extension of the fleet.

Here he joined the efforts of Mu'āwiya in Syria, who himself built ships. The main dockyard however appears to have been Alexandria, and in all the great sea-fights we find a co-operation of Egyptian and Syrian vessels. Arabian tradition neglects their maritime expeditions to a surprising extent, but Western sources have always emphasised this feature of the Arabian success in warfare. The intelligence gathered from the papyri during the last few years shews that the care for the building and manning of the fleet was, at all events in Egypt at the end of the seventh century, one of the chief occupations of the administration. Mu'āwiya required the fleet first and foremost against Byzantium, for, as long as the Greeks had command of the sea, no rest might be expected in Syria and as little in Alexandria. The first task for Mu'āwiya was to seize from the Byzantines their naval base, Cyprus, which lay dangerously near. The first marine expedition of the Arabs was against Cyprus in

the summer 649, and this was attended with success. Aradus, which lay still nearer to Syria, was not taken till a year later. In 655 Mu'āwiya contemplated an expedition to Constantinople, in which Egyptian ships in considerable numbers took part. On the Lycian coast near Phoenix, the Dhāt aṣ-Ṣawārī of the Arabs, a great battle ensued, the importance of which is clear from the fact that the Byzantines were led in person by the Emperor, Constans II. Either a certain Abu-l-A'war acted as admiral of the Arab fleet, or, according to other reports, the Egyptian governor 'Abdallāh. Trustworthy details are missing; in any case the battle resulted in a catastrophe comparable with the defeat on the Yarmūk. The powerful fleet of the Byzantines, supposed to be 500 ships strong, was completely destroyed, and the Emperor sought refuge in flight. The Arabs however seem also to have sustained losses sufficient to prevent them from following up their victory by advancing on Constantinople. Fortunately for the Byzantines Othman was murdered shortly afterwards, and thereupon began the struggle for the Caliphate which forced Mu'āwiya to conclude an ignominious peace with the Byzantines.

Later on Mu'āwiya took up afresh this expedition against the Byzantines, this time by water, and in Cilicia and Armenia. The Byzantine Armenia had been visited as far back as 642 by an expedition under Ḥabīb ibn Maslama, in connexion with the conquest of Mesopotamia, and its capital Dwin, north of the Araxes, had been temporarily occupied. Later expeditions were less fortunate, as an Armenian chief, Theodore, the ruler of the Reshtunians, organised an energetic resistance, and after his first success was supported by Byzantium with troops, and also by the grant of the title Patricius. Later on Theodore agreed with the Arabs and placed himself under their suzerainty. This caused a reaction of the Byzantine party and thereupon a counter-demonstration of the Arabs, who pushed forward under Ḥabīb as far as the Caucasus. He was supported by a contingent from the conquered land of Persia, which advanced even beyond the Caucasus, but was there destroyed by the Chazars. In Armenia also the Arabs could only hold their own until the beginning of the civil war. After the reunion in the empire sea and land enterprises, such as those already described, formed part of the yearly recurring duties of the government during the whole of the period of the Umayyads, and these enterprises were only discontinued during an occasional peace. From the papyri we know that for the annual summer expeditions (Jaish, *κούρσον*) special war taxes in kind were levied. These regular expeditions were made in the Near East in two directions; on the one hand to the west, to North Africa, and from 711 onwards to Spain, as we shall illustrate more fully in Chapter XII, and on the other hand to the north, embracing Asia Minor and Armenia.

The conquest of Constantinople was of course the goal which was always present to the minds of the Arabs. More than once too they came

very near to the attainment of their plan; twice under Mu'āwīya, the first occasion being principally a land expedition under Faḍāla, who conquered Chalcedon (668), and from thence in the spring of 669, in combination with the Caliph's son Yazīd, who had advanced to his help, besieged Constantinople. These land expeditions were in vain, and equally so were the regular, so-called seven years' fights between the fleets of the two powers, these lasting from 674 or even earlier until the death of Mu'āwīya (680), and taking place immediately before Constantinople, where the Arabs had secured for themselves a naval base. When at a later date, after the termination of the civil wars, the second great wave of expansion set in under the Caliph Walīd, Constantinople again appeared attainable to them. The remarkable siege of Constantinople, which lasted at least a year (716-717), took place, it is true, afterwards under Walīd's successor, the Caliph Sulaimān. This also ended unsuccessfully for the Arabs. The Arabian boundary remained as before mainly the Amanus and the Caucasus, and beyond that the limits of their dominion varied. But all these regular wars are connected in the closest degree with the internal history of the Byzantine empire, and for this reason they are treated in detail elsewhere. Saracens in this quarter came rather early to the frontier which for a considerable time they were destined not to cross.

The connexion of matters has compelled us whilst reviewing the relations between the Saracens and the Byzantines to anticipate other events in the dominions of the Caliphate. We now return to the reign of the Caliph Omar, under whom and his successor the expansion reached limits unchanged for a considerable time, for we cannot gain from the delineation of the mere outward expansion of the Saracens any satisfactory conception of the Arabian migration, which completely metamorphosed the political contour of the Mediterranean world. Even the interest of the student, in the first instance directed to the West, must not overlook the civil wars in the young Arabian world-empire, for they are in even greater degree than either Byzantines or Franks responsible for bringing to a standstill the movement which threatened Europe. By doing so we at the same time notice the beginnings of Muslim civilisation. If we fail truly to estimate this the continuity postulated at the commencement of our chapter becomes obscured, and the great influence of the East on western countries in the Middle Ages remains incomprehensible.

Omar died at the zenith of his life, unexpectedly struck down in the midst of his own community by the dagger of a Persian slave (3 Nov. 644). While Abū Bakr had decreed him as his successor simply by will, because the succession was felt on all sides to be evident, the dying Omar did not venture to entrust any particular one of his fellow-companions with the succession. This strict, conscientious, and sincerely religious man did not dare in the face of death to discriminate between the

candidates, all of whom were more or less incompetent. He therefore nominated a Board of Election (Shūrā), composed of six of the most respected of his colleagues, with the instruction to select from their midst the new Caliph. Ali, Othman, Zubair, Ṭalḥa, Sa'd ibn Abī Waqqāṣ and 'Abd-ar-Raḥmān ibn 'Auf had now to decide the fate of Islām. After long hesitation they agreed on Othman, probably because he appeared to be the weakest and most pliable, and each of them hoped to rule, first through him and afterwards in succession to him. This choice looks like a reaction; they had had enough of Omar's energetic and austere government—for he upheld the autocratic power of the representative of the prophet, even as against the proudest and most successful generals, probably less from personal ambition than from religious and political conviction. They speculated correctly, but they overlooked the fact that in a race to profit by the weakness of Othman his own family had a start which could not be overtaken. Othman was however an Umayyad, *i.e.* he belonged to the old Mecca aristocracy, who for a long time were the chief opponents of the prophet, but who, after his victory, had with fine political instinct seceded to his camp and had even migrated to Medina, in order to emulate the new religious aristocracy created by Mahomet. In this they succeeded only too well, for they counted among them men of remarkable intelligence, with whom the short-sighted intriguers, the honest blusterers and the pious unpolitical members of the circle of Companions could not keep up. They now induced Othman, who had at once nominated his cousin Marwān ibn al-Ḥakam to be the omnipotent Secretary of State, to fill all the positions of any importance or of any value with Umayyads or their partisans.

Later on Othman was reproached on all sides with this nepotism, which caused great discontent throughout the entire empire. To this discontent there was added an increasing reaction against the system of finance, founded by Omar and carried on without alteration by Othman. The lust of booty had led the Arabs out to battle, and the spoils belonged to them after deduction of the so-called prophet's fifth. But what was to be done with the enormous landed property which victors in such small numbers had acquired, and who was to receive the tribute paid yearly by the subjected peoples? Payment of this money to the respective conquerors of the individual territories would have been the most logical method of dealing with it, but with the fluctuations in the Arabian population this plan would have caused insuperable difficulties, apart from which it would have been from a statesman's point of view extremely unwise. Omar therefore founded a state treasury. The residents of the newly formed military camps received a fixed stipend; the surplus of the receipts flowed to Medina, where it was not indeed capitalised but utilised for state pensions, which the Caliph decreed according to his own judgment to the members of the theocracy, graduated according to rank and dignity. Under the impartial Omar

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this was not disagreeable to any, the more especially as at that time the gains from the booty were still very large. But when under Othman these gains dwindled and became ever smaller, this state treasury appeared to the Arabian provincial tribes as an oppression of the provinces. The nepotism of Othman increased the opposition, and it finally found expression in open revolt. These fanatical partisans were of opinion that Othman was the man against whom the real holy war should be waged. The Kūfa men were first to rebel against the governor nominated by Othman (655); with unaccountable weakness Othman immediately abandoned his representative. The Egyptians were the most energetic in their protest, and started for Medina in April 655 to the number of about 500. The disquiet which was simmering on all sides was secretly fomented by the disappointed Companions in Medina; they were the real plotters who made use of the discontent of the provincials. When after long discussion the Egyptians besieged Othman in his own house these Companions looked on inactively, or at the most excused themselves by a few pretended manœuvres, but in fact they were not displeased when the rebels stormed the house and slew the defenceless old Caliph whilst at prayer (17 June 655).

From this time onward fate took its own course. Among the Medina Companions Ali was now doubtless the nearest claimant to the Caliphate, and some even went so far as to render him homage. On the other hand, would he not certainly appear to all the Umayyads, and especially to the powerful governor of Syria, as the murderer of Othman? Mu'āwiya was firmly established in Syria, and was in a position to venture, under this pretext — to him probably more than a pretext — to dispute the Caliphate even with the son-in-law of the prophet. The Umayyads moreover were not the only enemies that Ali had to contend with. His former allies, Zubair and Ṭalḥa, who were at least as much to blame as he, roused the people against him, and this was done even more determinedly by the prophet's widow 'Ā'isha, who had always been opposed to him. They were supported by the Baṣra tribes, whilst Ali sought support with the Kūfa people. Near Baṣra the quarrel came to a decision, in the so-called Camel battle, which takes its name from the fact that 'Ā'isha, in accordance with old Arabian custom, was present at the battle in a camel-palanquin, as a sacred sign of war. Ali conquered and 'Ā'isha's part was played out. Ṭalḥa and Zubair were killed in the fight (9 Dec. 656). Ali was thus master of 'Irāq, and Kūfa became his residence.

Hereupon Arabia ceased to be the centre of the empire, and Medina sank to the status of a provincial town, in which piety and easy-going elegance had the necessary quiet for development. The history of Nearer Asia however again resolved itself, as it did before Islām, into the opposition between 'Irāq and Syria. The two halves of the empire armed themselves for the fight for supremacy, Muslims against Muslims. At first the better discipline of the Syrians and their higher culture

carried the day. The recollection however of the brief political splendour of 'Irāk formed the basis for a movement which was destined to gain strength, which a century later swept away the rule of the Umayyads. Once more was the capital of the latest Asiatic world-power transferred to Babylon.

After the Camel battle Ali's position was thoroughly favourable, as Mu'āwiya could not take any energetic steps against him so long as Egypt remained on Ali's side. Mu'āwiya's main attention was therefore fixed on Egypt; and in this view he was aided and abetted by 'Amr, the first conqueror of Egypt, who had allied himself with Mu'āwiya in the hope of attaining through him the governorship of Egypt. For that reason he rendered Mu'āwiya most important services in the war against Ali, and as Ali at this juncture advanced against Mu'āwiya a battle extending over several days ensued, after long delay, at Šiffin on the Syrian border, not far distant from Raḳḳa (26-27 July 657). Ali's victory appeared certain, when 'Amr conceived the idea of fastening copies of the Koran to the points of the lances and calling on the holy book for a decision. This trick succeeded, and much against his will Ali was forced to yield to the pressure of the pious members of his army. A court of arbitration was thereupon agreed on. Mu'āwiya's confidential representative was of course 'Amr, whilst Ali had forced upon him in a like capacity Mūsā al-Ash'arī, a man by no means thoroughly devoted to him. They had scarcely parted when those same pious members of his army altered their views, and now blamed Ali for having placed men, instead of God and the sword, as judges over him. Several thousand men separated from Ali and entered into a separate camp at Ḥarūrā, whence they were called Ḥarūrites, or secessionists, Khārijites. They resisted Ali by force, and he was compelled to cut down most of them at Nahrawān (7 July 658). Later on they split into innumerable small sects and still gave much trouble to Ali and the Umayyads. The sense of independence and the robber-knight ideas of the ancient Arabians lived still in them, but under a religious cloak. Offshoots from these people, the so-called Ibādites, exist even to-day in South Arabia and in East and North Africa.

The information we have as to the result of the court of arbitration is untrustworthy. In any case the clever 'Amr outwitted his coadjudicator by persuading him also to deal with Ali and Mu'āwiya as being on the same footing, whilst of course Ali was the only one who had a Caliphate to lose. Ali appears actually to have been divested of this dignity by decree of the arbitration, but this decision did not induce him to abdicate. This arbitration court was held at Adhruh in the year 658. Even more painful for Ali than this failure was the loss of Egypt, which 'Amr shortly afterwards reconquered for himself, and administered until his death more as a viceroy than a governor. No definite decision was brought about between Ali and Mu'āwiya, as their forces were about equally

balanced. It was not until July 660 that Mu'āwiya caused himself to be proclaimed Caliph at Jerusalem. Six months later Ali succumbed to the dagger of an assassin (24 Jan. 661). Mu'āwiya had to thank this circumstance for his victory, for Ali's son and successor Ḥasan came to terms with him in return for an allowance. Herewith began the rule of the Umayyads, and Damascus became the capital of the empire.

This has been rightly termed the Arabian Empire, for it was founded on a national basis, in marked contrast to the subsequent State of the Abbasids, for which Islām served as a foundation. The first Caliphs had striven after a theocracy, but, as all the members of the theocracy were Arabs, an Arabian national empire was created. For a time the migration of the tribes had more weight than religion. We see this most clearly by the fact that no longer the pious companions, but the old Arabian aristocracy, no longer Anṣār and Muhājirūn, but the Arabian tribes of Syria and 'Irāk, determined the destinies of the empire. The great expansion however was only able to hold back religion for a time. Religion soon served to give authority to the government in power, but at the same time provided a special motive for all kinds of opposition. That is shewn by the domestic policy of the Umayyad State; in the first place to force the discipline of the State on the ruling class, *i.e.* the Arabs, without which no successful combined social life was possible, and in the second place it was necessary to regulate their relations with the non-Arabian subordinate class.

The fight for the supremacy in the State, which appeared to the 'Irāk after the days of Ali as the rule of the hated Syrians, formed the life-task of all the great Caliphs of the house of Umayya. Mu'āwiya had still most of all the manners of an old Arabian prince; he appeared to the Romaic element simply as the *πρωτοσύμβουλος* of his governors, *σύμβουλος*. In Syria they had been accustomed to such things since the days of the Ghassānids, and to that may be ascribed the better discipline of the Syrian Arabs, who in all respects stood on a higher plane of culture than those of 'Irāk. Mu'āwiya was a clever prince, and ruled by wisdom over the tribes, whose naturally selfish rivalries supported the structure of his State like the opposing spans of an arch. His rule was so patriarchal, and his advisers had so much voice in the matter, that some have thought to have found traces of parliamentary government under Mu'āwiya. Nevertheless Mu'āwiya knew quite well how to carry his point for the State, *i.e.* for himself, though he avoided the absolutist forms and the pomp of later Caliphs. The nepotism of Othman was quite foreign to his rule; although his relatives did not fare badly under him he nevertheless looked after the principles of State in preference to them. He had a brilliant talent for winning important men. On the same principles as the Caliph in Damascus, the Thakifite¹ Ziyād, whom he had adopted as a brother, ruled as an independent viceroy

¹ *I.e.* of the tribe of Thakīf. See p. 325.

over the eastern half of the kingdom. Mu'āwiya's aspirations in state policy were finally to found a dynasty. He proclaimed his son Yazīd as his successor, although this act was opposed not only to the ancient common law based on usage but also to the mode of election of the theocracy.

On Mu'āwiya's death (18 April 680) Yazīd was accordingly recognised in the West and partially also in 'Irāk. At once a double opposition began to foment; that of the Ali party in 'Irāk, which had already begun to revive under Mu'āwiya, and the theocratic opposition of the Hījāz. The endeavour to transfer the central government once more, respectively to 'Irāk and to the Hījāz, probably underlay the opposition in both cases. As regards 'Irāk that theory is a certainty, for the families of Kūfa and Baṣra had not forgotten that in Ali's time they had been the masters of the empire. Now however Ali's Shī'a (party) was thrust into the background by the Syrians. They looked back to Ali, and their ardent desire was a restoration of that golden period for Kūfa. Their enthusiasm for Ali and his kin is therefore nothing more than a glorification of their own special province, of the one and only 'Irāk Caliph. This brilliant period they hoped after the death of the great Mu'āwiya to recover for themselves by selecting Ḥusain, the second son of Ali. Ḥusain complied with the solicitations of the Kūfa people. These however, unsteady and undisciplined as ever, shrank from rebellion and failed him at the last moment. Ḥusain and those remaining faithful to him were cut down at Karbalā (10 Oct. 680). Ali's son had thereby, like others before him, fallen as a martyr to the cause of Shī'ism. Political aspirations slowly assumed a religious tinge. The death of the prophet's grandson in the cause of the Kūfa people, their remorse on that account, their faded hopes, their hatred of the Syrians, and, last but not least, heterodox currents which now began to shew themselves, prepared the way for the great Shiite insurrection a few years later under Mukhtār. Ali is now no longer simply the companion and son-in-law of the prophet, but has become the heir of his prophetic spirit, which then lives on in his sons. The Ali dynasty — so at least say the legitimists — are the only true priestly Imāms, the only legal Caliphs. The struggle for the house of the prophet, for the Banū Hāshim, becomes more and more the watchword of the opposition party, who, after their political overthrow in 'Irāk, removed their sphere of operation to Persia. There however this Arabian legitimism united with Iranian claims, and, in the fight for the Banū Hāshim, the Persians were arrayed against the Arabs. With this war-cry the Abbasids conquered.

Although Ḥusain's expedition to Karbalā had ended in a fiasco, the Umayyads were not destined to get off so lightly against the opposition of the Medina people, an opposition of the old elective theocracy against the new Syrian dynasty. Their opposition candidate was 'Abdallāh, son of that Zubair who had fallen in the fight against Ali. Yazīd was

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compelled to undertake a campaign against the holy cities, which earned for him the hate of later generations. The matter was however not so bad as it has been represented, and was moreover a political necessity. His military commander broke up the resistance of the Medina party in the battle on the Harra (26 Aug. 683), subsequently besieging the opposition Caliph in Mecca. Just at this time Yazid died (11 Nov. 683), and now the succession became a difficult question. Ibn az-Zubair had the best chance of being universally recognised, as Yazid's youthful son and successor, Mu'āwiya II, a man of no authority, died only a few months after his father. In Syria too large groups of the people, especially the members of the ʔais race, sided with the Zubair party, whilst the Kalb race, who had been long resident in Syria, and with whom Mu'āwiya had become related by marriage, allied themselves unreservedly with the Umayyads. The Kalb knew only too well that the Umayyad rule meant the supremacy of Syria. And now the question arose, which branch of the family should rule. Practical necessities and traditional claims led to the Umayyad party finally selecting on the principle of seniority a man already known to us, Marwān ibn al-Ḥakam, to be Caliph. The decisive battle against the Zubair faction took place at Marj Rāhiṭ in the beginning of 684. The Umayyads were victorious, and Marwān was proclaimed Caliph in Syria.

The Umayyads had however to pay dearly for this victory, for it destroyed the fundamental principles of the Arabian Empire. Hate once generated at Marj Rāhiṭ, the blood-feud there arising was so bitter that even the ever-growing religious spirit of Islām was unable to make headway against it. The Arabs had previously been divided into numerous factions warring against each other, but now the battle of Marj Rāhiṭ created that ineradicable race hatred between the ʔais and Kalb tribes, which spread to other older racial opponents. The ʔais were distributed throughout the entire kingdom; the opposition towards them drove their opponents into the ranks of the Kalb. The political parties became genealogical branches according to the theory of the Arabs, which regarded all political relationship from an ethnical standpoint. And now for the first time, not in the remote past, arose that opposition between the Northern and Southern Arabians which permeated public life, and which only in part coincided with actual racial descent. Here it was the ʔais, there the Kalb, and under these party cries the Arabs tore at each other henceforward throughout the whole empire, and this purely political and particularist tribal feud undermined the rule of the Arabs at least as much as their religious political opposition to the authority of the State, for it was just the authority of the State itself which was thereby ruined; the governors could no longer permanently hold aloof from the parties, and finally the Caliphs themselves were unable to do so. But for the time being the actual zenith of the dynasty followed these disorders.

Marwān quickly succeeded in conquering Egypt, and then died, leaving a difficult inheritance to his son 'Abd-al-Malik (685-705). Complications with the Byzantines, who had incited the Mardaites, an unconquered mountain tribe in the Amanus, against him, rendered it impossible for him during his first years of office to take energetic steps in 'Irāk. The Zubair faction represented by Zubair's brother Muṣ'ab ruled there nominally. Apart from these however the Shiites had now attained to eminence and had organised a great insurrection under Mukhtār. They defeated an army sent out by 'Abd-al-Malik, but were then themselves defeated by the Zubairite Muṣ'ab. The latter was hindered in his fight against 'Abd-al-Malik by the Khārijites, who offered opposition to any and every form of state government and had developed into an actual scourge. In the decisive battle against 'Abd-al-Malik on the Tigris (690) Muṣ'ab accordingly succumbed to the military and diplomatic superiority of the Syrian Caliph. The opposition Caliph still maintained his resistance in Mecca. 'Abd-al-Malik despatched against him one of his best men, Ḥajjāj, who managed in 692 to put an end both to the Caliphate and to the life of the Zubairite.

This Ḥajjāj became later 'Abd-al-Malik's Ziyād, or almost unrestricted viceroy, of the eastern half of the empire. He exercised the authority of the State in a very energetic manner, and his reward is to be shamefully misrepresented in the historical account given of him by the tradition of 'Irāk, created by those who had been affected by his energetic methods. Ḥajjāj was also a Thakifite. He carried out in 'Irāk what 'Abd-al-Malik endeavoured to do in Syria, namely, the consolidation of the empire. The constitutional principles of the dominions of Islām were, according to tradition, formulated by Omar, but the extent to which tradition ascribes these to him is impossible, for the ten years of his reign, occupied as they were with enormous military expeditions, did not leave him the necessary time and quiet. For this reason later investigators consider that the chief merit must be attributed to Mu'āwiya. Probably however the honours must be divided between Omar, Mu'āwiya, and 'Abd-al-Malik, possibly including Hishām. Omar made the Arabs supreme over the taxpaying subjected peoples, and avoided particularism by the introduction of the state treasury. Mu'āwiya placed the Arabian Empire on a dynastic basis and disciplined the tribes by introducing the political in place of the religious state authority. 'Abd-al-Malik however was the first to create the actual Arabian administration, and this was followed under Hishām by the abolition of the agrarian political prerogative of the Arabs, to be discussed later. This process in the economic life was followed under the Abbasids by its extension to politics.

The Arabs were not so foolish as many modern conquerors, who first destroy the administrative organisation which they find in newly con-

quered foreign countries, and then suddenly stand face to face with insuperable difficulties. In accordance with their fundamental political point of view they left all such matters as they found them, contenting themselves with the punctual payment by the local authorities of the stipulated tribute. How this was collected was a matter of small moment to them. Only the supreme heads of the more important administrative departments were Arabs. All the middle and lower administrative positions were filled by natives as late as the eighth century, and even later. This complicated system was not interfered with until the reign of 'Abd-al-Malik and his successor Walid, and then not in the sense of immediately making it Arabian, though it was placed on a bilingual basis by the introduction of Arabic. Arab-Greek documents of this period, from Egypt, have been preserved to us in profusion. But in other matters also the result of the more settled conditions was seen in the changes made by 'Abd-al-Malik. He is regarded as the founder of the Arabian coinage; true, he accepted here the already existing systems, that is, for the Byzantine districts he renewed the old gold coinage, and for the Persian territories the old silver coinage was adopted. The principal point however seems to be that under this ruler it was first recognised that Omar's fiscal system was untenable, and that both in principle and in form it must cease. Hitherto the Muslims had remained exempt from taxation and the subjected peoples had provided the necessary revenue. At the outset they had forgotten that through the extension of Islām as a religion the number of taxpayers would of necessity become smaller and smaller, so that thereby religion would sap the foundations of the Arabian State. With the foundation of the military camps, which soon grew into large towns, the natives had on the spot a much better source of income than in the country, where the peasants had to pay their quota of tribute. Thus an exodus from the country began, and at the same time the number of converts to Islām increased. As the new believers ceased to be subject to taxes, the result of this process on the state treasury may easily be imagined. At the same time it became thus evident that the form of Omar's regulations was unsuitable, for this exodus from the country simply necessitated an individual treatment of the districts liable to pay duty, and these conditions compelled the Arabs to concern themselves with details. But in doing so the Arabian upper class was of necessity deeply concerned with the construction of the whole system of government. This process commences under 'Abd-al-Malik. His representative Hajjāj sought to avoid the evil consequences for the treasury by including the newly converted believers as liable to taxation, thus deviating from Omar's system.

The increasing settlement of Arabs in the fertile country, which had been liable to tribute whilst in the possession of non-Muslims, had the same result as the change of religion in the subjected peoples. Omar II

sought to obviate this by forbidding the sale of such country. It was not however till later, and probably by degrees, that it was decided, principally under the Caliph Hishām, to alter the principle of taxation, though the alteration is much obscured by tradition. The tribute, which was principally drawn from the ground tax, was converted into a ground tax pure and simple, and was levied irrespective of creed on all property owners; the tribute intended to demonstrate the dominion of the Arabs was resolved into an individual poll-tax of the old sort, which was only payable by non-Muslims and ceased in the event of conversion. This state of affairs is regarded by tradition as Omar's work, but it is the result of gradual development extending over a century. This very energetic manner in which the Arabs applied themselves to the administration commenced with 'Abd-al-Malik and found its termination under the Abbasids.

Under 'Abd-al-Malik and his viceroys, his brother 'Abd-al-'Azīz in Egypt and Ḥajjāj in 'Irāq, an executive authority was founded, which, although occasionally shaken by serious revolts, was nevertheless strong, so that his successor Walīd (705-715) was again able to consider the question of an extension of the boundaries. Under his rule the Arabian Empire attained its greatest expansion; Spain was conquered, and the Arabs penetrated into the Punjab and far into Central Asia, right to the borders of China. These incursions however do not fall within the range of our present observation. Under 'Abd-al-Malik and Walīd the empire, and above all Syria, stands on the pinnacle of prosperity; the most stately buildings were erected, such as the Omar Mosque in Jerusalem, and the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus. Poetry flourished at the brilliant Syrian court, and, guided by Christian learning, Arabian science begins to make its appearance.

Now however the traces of impending collapse begin to appear. It was only with difficulty that Ḥajjāj suppressed a powerful military revolt. The supremacy of the State could only be maintained in 'Irāq with the assistance of Syrian troops. In the eastern provinces the ʔais and Kalb wage constant warfare with each other, and the reign of the later Umayyads is occupied in a struggle with these permanently mutinous eastern districts. Most of the later Umayyads enjoyed but a brief reign, Sulaimān 715-717, Omar II till 720, Yazīd II till 724. Hishām, 724-743, who grappled seriously with the problem of agrarian policy, and secured once again in Khālīd al-ʔasrī a viceroy for the East after the style of Ziyād and Ḥajjāj, was the only one capable of restoring once more a certain amount of quiet.

Thereupon however followed the irretrievable decline of the Umayyad State. The political opposition of ʔais and Kalb converted the Caliph into the puppet of inter-tribal feuds; Umayyads fought against Umayyads. The rulers succeeded each other in rapid succession. History records four Umayyad Caliphs in the period of 743 to 744. It would

occupy too much space here to trace all these disturbances. When Marwān II, the last of the Umayyads, a man by no means personally incapable, ascended the throne in the year 744, the game was already lost. Particularism had won the day. The general fight between all parties was however essentially a fight against Syria and the Umayyads. In this cause the new combination, which made its first efforts in the far east, in Khorāsān, attained success. In no other place were the Arabs so intermingled with the subject peoples as here, and here too the religious opposition against the Umayyads was taken up more vigorously than anywhere else. It has already been indicated above that the Shī'a was destined to prevail in Persia. In their fight for the family of the prophet, the Abbasids, under their general Abū Muslim, were victorious, and then, supported by the Persian element, they conquered first the eastern Arabs and subsequently the Syrians. In the year 750 the Umayyad rule was at an end.

The victory of the Abbasids was a victory of the Persians over the Arabs. The subjected classes had slowly raised themselves to a level with the Arabs. When Christians and Persians first accepted Islām it was not possible to include them in the theocracy in any other way than by attaching them as clients (*Mawālī*) to the Arabian tribal system. They were the better educated and the more highly cultivated of the two races. In the numerous revolts they fought on the side of the Arabs. The contrast between the Arabs and the *Mawālī* had its cause in the constitution of the State as founded by Omar. The more the *Mawālī* increased in importance and the more they permeated the Arabian tribes, so the universalistic, *i.e.* the democratic tendency of Islām was bound in corresponding degree to force its way into wider circles. On the other hand the continuous fights of the Arabian tribes against the authority of the State and against each other led to a dissolution of the political and ethnical conditions under which Islām had caused the preponderance of the Arabian element. Thus grew more and more a tendency to level Arabs and non-Arabs. Both became merged in the term Muslim, which even to this day represents for many peoples their nationality. The Persians were much more religious than the Arabs, and they accepted the political ideal of the Shī'a, which was tinged with religion, more than actually religious. This religious movement then swept away the dominion of the Umayyads, and thereby the international empire of the Abbasids took the place of the national Arabian Empire. The Arabian class disappeared and was superseded by a mixed official aristocracy, based no longer on religious merit and noble descent, but on authority delegated by the ruling prince. Thus arose out of the patriarchal kingdom of the Umayyads the absolutist rule of the Abbasids and therewith Persian civilisation made its entrance into Islām. The ancient East had conquered.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

(1) The following abbreviations are used for titles of periodicals:

AARAB.	Annales de l'Académie royale d'archéologie de Belgique. Antwerp.
AB.	Analecta Bollandiana. Brussels.
ABe.	Archives belges. Liège.
AHR.	American Historical Review. New York and London.
AKKR.	Archiv für katholisches Kirchenrecht. Mainz.
AM.	Annales du Midi. Toulouse.
AMur.	Archivio Muratoriano. Rome.
ASAK.	Anzeiger für schweizerische Alterthumskunde. Zurich.
ASHF.	Annuaire-Bulletin de la Société de l'histoire de France. Paris.
ASI.	Archivio storico italiano. Florence.
ASL.	Archivio storico Lombardo. Milan.
ASRSP.	Archivio della Società romana di storia patria. Rome.
BCRH.	Bulletins de la Commission royale d'histoire. Brussels.
BHisp.	Bulletin hispanique. Bordeaux.
BRAH.	Boletín de la R. Academia de la historia. Madrid.
BZ.	Byzantinische Zeitschrift. Leipsic.
CQR.	Church Quarterly Review. London.
CR.	Classical Review. London.
CRSA.	Comptes rendus des séances de l'Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres. Paris.
DZG.	Deutsche Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft. Freiburg-i.-B.
DZKR.	Deutsche Zeitschrift für Kirchenrecht. Leipsic.
EHR.	English Historical Review. London.
FDG.	Forschungen zur deutschen Geschichte.
HJ.	Historisches Jahrbuch. Munich.
Hm.	Hermes. Berlin.
HVJS.	Historische Vierteljahrsschrift. Leipsic.
HZ.	Historische Zeitschrift (von Sybel). Munich and Berlin.
JA.	Journal Asiatique. Paris.
JB.	Jahresberichte der Geschichtswissenschaft im Auftrage der historischen Gesellschaft zu Berlin. 1878 ff. Berlin.
JHS.	Journal of Hellenic Studies. London.
JRAS.	Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society. London.
JRGS.	Journal of the Royal Geographical Society. London.
JSG.	Jahrbuch für schweizerische Geschichte. Zurich.
JTS.	Journal of Theological Studies. London.
MA.	Le moyen âge. Paris.
MIOGF.	Mittheilungen des Instituts für österreichische Geschichtsforschung. Innsbruck.

NAGDG.	Neues Archiv der Gesellschaft für ältere deutsche Geschichtskunde. Hanover and Leipsic.
NRDF.	Nouvelle Revue historique du droit français. Paris.
QFIA.	Quellen und Forschungen aus italienischen Archiven und Bibliotheken. Rome.
RA.	Revue archéologique. Paris.
RBAB.	Revue des bibliothèques et des archives de la Belgique. Brussels.
RBén.	Revue bénédictine. Maredsous.
RCel.	Revue celtique. Paris.
RCHL.	Revue critique d'histoire et de littérature. Paris.
RH.	Revue historique. Paris.
RHD.	Revue d'histoire diplomatique. Paris.
RHE.	Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique. Louvain.
Rhein.	
Mus.	Rheinisches Museum für Philologie. Frankfurt-a.-M.
RN.	Revue de numismatique. Paris.
ROC.	Revue de l'Orient chrétien. Paris.
RQCA.	Römische Quartalschrift für christliche Altertumskunde und Kirchengeschichte. Rome.
RQH.	Revue des questions historiques. Paris.
RSH.	Revue de synthèse historique. Paris.
RSI.	Rivista storica italiana. Turin.
RSS.	Rivista di scienze storiche. Pavia.
SKAW.	Sitzungsberichte der Kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften. Vienna. [Phil. hist. Classe.]
SPAW.	Sitzungsberichte der kön. preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften. Berlin.
SS.	Studi Storici. Pavia.
TQS.	Theologische Quartalschrift. Tübingen.
TRHS.	Transactions of the Royal Historical Society. London.
TSK.	Theologische Studien und Kritiken. Gotha.
VV.	Vizantiiskii Vremennik. St Petersburg.
ZCK.	Zeitschrift für christliche Kunst. Düsseldorf.
ZKG.	Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte. Gotha.
ZKT.	Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie. Gotha.
ZR.	Zeitschrift für Rechtsgeschichte. Weimar. 1861-78. Continued as
ZSR.	Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung für Rechtswissenschaft. Weimar. 1880 ff.
ZWT.	Zeitschrift für wissenschaftliche Theologie. Frankfurt-a.-M.

(2) Among other abbreviations used (*see General Bibliography*) are:

AcadIBL.	Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres.
AcadIP.	Académie Impériale de Pétersbourg.
AllgDB.	Allgemeine deutsche Biographie.
ASBoll.	Acta Sanctorum Bollandiana.
BEC.	Bibliothèque de l'École des chartes.
BGen.	Nouvelle Biographie générale.
BHE.	Bibliothèque de l'École des hautes études.
BUniv.	Biographie universelle.
CIG.	Corpus Inscriptionum Graecarum.
CIL.	Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum.
CSCO.	Corpus scriptorum christianorum orientalium.
CSEL.	Corpus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum latinorum.
CSHB.	Corpus scriptorum historiae Byzantinae.
DCA.	Dictionary of Christian Antiquities.

DCB.	Dictionary of Christian Biography.
DNB.	Dictionary of National Biography.
EofrAR.	École française d'Athènes et de Rome. Paris.
EETS.	Early English Text Society.
EncBr.	Encyclopædia Britannica.
FHG.	Müller's Fragmenta Historicorum Graecorum.
KAW.	Kaiserliche Akademie der Wissenschaften. Vienna.
MGH.	Monumenta Germaniae Historica.
MPG.	Migne's Patrologiae cursus completus. Ser. graeca.
MPL.	Migne's Patrologiae cursus completus. Ser. latina.
PAW.	Königliche preussische Akademie d. Wissenschaften. Berlin.
RAH.	Real Academia de la Historia. Madrid.
RE'.	Real-Encyclopädie für protestantische Theologie, etc.
RGS.	Royal Geographical Society.
RHS.	Royal Historical Society.
SHF.	Société d'histoire française.

In the case of many other works given in the General Bibliography abbreviations as stated there are used.

Abh.	Abhandlungen.	kais.	kaiserlich.
J.	Journal.	kön.	königlich.
Jahrb.	Jahrbuch.	mem.	memoir.
R.	Review, Revue.	mém.	mémoire.
Viert.	Vierteljahrschrift.	n.s.	new series.
Z.	Zeitschrift.	publ.	publication.
antiq.	antiquarian, antiquaire.	roy.	royal, royale.
coll.	collections.	ser.	series.
hist.	history, historical, historique, historisch.	soc.	society.

CHAPTERS XI AND XII

THE EXPANSION OF THE SARACENS

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CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

- 314 Council of Arles.
- 410 Sack of Rome by Alaric.
- 429 Mission of Germanus and Lupus to Britain.
- 430 Death of Augustine.
- 432-461 St Patrick in Ireland.
- 449 Traditional date of Hengest and Horsa.
- 451 Battle of the Mauriac Plain.
- Council of Chalcedon.
- 455 Sack of Rome by the Vandals.
- 481-511 Reign of Clovis.
- 432 The *Henoticon* of Zeno.
- 493 Traditional date of Cerdic.
- 493-526 Reign of Theodoric in Italy.
- 506 Issue of the *Breviarium Alarici*.
- 507 Battle of the *Campus Vogladensis*.
- 511 Division of the Frankish kingdom by the sons of Clovis.
- 518 Justin I Emperor.
- 527-565 Reign of Justinian.
- 529 The Schools of Athens closed.
- 532 The *Nika* riot.
- Building of St Sophia begun.
- 533 Issue of the *Digest*.
- Conquest of Africa by Belisarius.
- 534 Frankish conquest of the Burgundians.
- 535-553 The Gothic War.
- 537-538 The great siege of Rome by the Goths.
- 540 Capture of Ravenna by Belisarius.
- 541 Abolition of the Consulships.
- 548 Death of Theodora.
- 552 Battle of Taginae.
- 553 Battle of the Lactarian Mount.
- Fifth General Council.
- 554 Conquest of Southern Spain by the Imperial forces.
- 558 The Huns before Constantinople.
- 560-616 Reign of Aethelberht in Kent.
- 561 Division of the Frankish kingdom by the sons of Chlotar I.
- 565 Justin II Emperor.
- 568 Invasion of Italy by the Lombards.
- c. 570 Birth of Mahomet.

- 575 Assassination of Sigebert.
 578 Tiberius II Emperor.
 582 Maurice Emperor.
 584 Assassination of Chilperic.
 589 Conversion of the Visigoths. Third Council of Toledo.
 590 Agilulf king of the Lombards.
 590-603 Pontificate of Gregory the Great.
 591 Chosroes restored by Maurice.
 594 Death of Gregory of Tours.
 597 Landing of Augustine in Thanet.
 Death of Columba.
 602 Phocas Emperor.
 610 Heraclius Emperor.
 613 Reunion of the Frankish kingdom under Chlotar II.
 614 Capture of Jerusalem by the Persians.
 622 Flight of Mahomet to Medina.
 625-638 Pope Honorius.
 626 Siege of Constantinople by Persians and Avars.
 627 Baptism of Edwin of Deira.
 Battle of Nineveh.
 628 Peace with Persia.
 629 Expulsion of Byzantines from Spain.
 632 Death of Mahomet. Abū Bakr Caliph.
 633 Battle of Heathfield.
 634 Mission of Birinus in Wessex.
 Omar Caliph.
 635-642 Reign of Oswald in Northumbria.
 636 Battle of the Yarmūk.
 Issue of the *Ekthesis*.
 637 Battle of Kādisiya.
 638 Capture of Jerusalem by the Arabs.
 640 Invasion of Egypt by the Arabs.
 641 Constantine III Emperor.
 Constans II Emperor.
 Battle of Nihāwand.
 642 Chindaswinth king in Spain.
 Battle of Maserfield.
 642-671 Oswy king in Northumbria.
 644 Othman Caliph.
 647 Final capture of Alexandria by the Arabs.
 648 Issue of the *Type*.
 653 Mu'āwiya reaches Dorylaeum.
 Arrest of Pope Martin.
 655 Battle of the Winwaed.
 Ali Caliph — Civil war.
 659 Mercian Revolt.
 661 Mu'āwiya Caliph.
 663 Constans in Rome.
 664 Synod of Whitby.
 668 Constantine IV Emperor.
 669-690 Episcopate of Theodore at Canterbury.
 671-685 Egfrith in Northumbria.
 673 Synod of Hertford.
 673-677 Saracen attacks on Constantinople.
 680 Synod of Heathfield.
 Murder of Husain at Karbalā.

- 685 Battle of Nechtansmere.
 Justinian II Emperor.
 687 Battle of Tertry.
 688 Baptism and death of Ceadwalla.
 688-726 Ine king in Wessex.
 692 The Trullan Council.
 695 Leontius Emperor.
 697 Final capture of Carthage by the Saracens.
 698 Tiberius (Apsimar) Emperor.
 705 Justinian II restored.
 709 Death of Wilfrid.
 711 Philippicus Emperor.
 Battle of La Janda. Saracen conquest of Spain.
 712-744 Liutprand king of the Lombards.
 713 Anastasius II Emperor.
 715-731 Pope Gregory II.
 716 Theodosius III Emperor.
 716-757 Aethelbald king in Mercia.
 717 Battle of Vincy.
 717-741 Leo III Emperor.
 723 Boniface consecrated a bishop.
 725 Beginning of the Iconoclast Controversy.
 727 The Italian Revolt.
 731-741 Pope Gregory III.
 731 End of Bede's *History*.
 732 Battle of Tours.
 734 Bede's Letter to Ecgbert.
 739 Embassy of Gregory III to Charles Martel.
 741-752 Pope Zacharias.
 741-775 Constantine V Emperor.
 743 Boniface archbishop of Mainz.
 749 Aistulf king of the Lombards.
 750 Fall of the Umayyads.
 751-768 Pepin king.
 754-756 Frankish Interventions in Italy.
 755 Death of Boniface.
 'Abd-ar-Rahmān Caliph in Spain.
 756 Desiderius king of the Lombards.
 757-796 Offa king in Mercia.
 759 Pepin's conquest of Septimania.
 768-771 Charles and Carloman.
 771-814 Charles alone.
 772-795 Pope Hadrian I.
 772-804 Saxon Wars.
 774 End of the Lombard kingdom.
 778 Roncevalles.
 787 Second Council of Nicaea.
 Submission of Benevento.
 Deposition of Tassilo.
 787-802 Archbishopric of Lichfield.
 794 Diet of Frankfort.
 795 Capture of the Avar Ring.
 795-816 Pope Leo III.
 799 Outrage on Pope Leo (25 Mar.).
 800 Arrival of Charles at Rome (24 Nov.).
 The Imperial Coronation (25 Dec.).

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- 807-811** Danish Wars.
811 Completion of the Spanish March.
814 Death of Charles (28 Jan.).
831 Saracen conquest of Palermo.
846 Saracen attack on Rome.
859 Saracen conquest of Sicily completed.
871 Capture of Bari from the Saracens.
909-1171 Fāṭimides in Egypt.
915 Saracens driven from the Garigliano.
1038-1040 Campaigns of Maniakes in Sicily.
1061-1091 Norman conquest of Sicily.